The
UNITARIAN MONTHLY

No. 161 (Vol. XV.—2) FEBRUARY, 1917. ONE PENNY.

OUR POSITION

CLEARLY EXPRESSED:

I BELIEVE in the Unity of the Universe, and behind it one Will, one Power, one Spirit, directing, governing, guiding the whole. I am a Unitarian.

I believe in the Unity of God—the one God, the Father Almighty, the Soul of whom our souls are born, the "Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe,' finding His highest manifestation in the mind and heart of highest men, revealing Himself as Life, as Power, as Will, as Purpose, as Beauty, as Mind, as Soul, as Truth, as Love.

I believe in the Unity of Mankind, in that Love; in the Brotherhood of Man, because of the universal Sonship of God. We are imperfect now—O! how imperfect in our consciousness of that Unity, but the Brotherhood is real in fact, and only awaits our recognition by our action, our life. And Unitarians believe in that kind of action and life; they have striven valiantly and well in the past to make more real that Brotherhood. They have been foremost in the ranks of social reformers.—

Rev. JOHN C. BALLANTYNE.

M.B.

Notes and News.

We hope that our new front page, and introduction of other changes in the arrangement of contents, will give increased satisfaction to our readers. The border design of front page is by the wife of one of our well-known Unitarian ministers, and is a gift to our cause, for which we are grateful.

Sir Robindranath Tagore, the famous Indian poet, during his recent visit to America, received hospitality from leading Unitarians in all parts of the country. His sincere attachment to Theism naturally attracted him to the Unitarian fellowship. At Detroit, where the Rev. E. R. Shippen is minister, on the Sunday evening when the great Hindu poet addressed the congregation, the Unitarian Church was filled to its utmost limits long before the hour of service. Mr. Shippen reports that it was a most inspiring and memorable occasion. Some of our readers will remember meeting Robindranath Tagore a few years ago at the Conversazione held in connection with the Whit-week meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. His beautiful and impressive face, with features so noble and calm, lingers in the memory.

A Sale of Work at the Stockport Unitarian Church has realised over £110. Successful "At Homes," at Chapel Lane, Bradford, Yorks, cleared £75 for church repairs. The Minister, Rev. T. Paxton, has received handsome presentation gifts from the Bradford Khaki Club, in appreciation of his public services as secretary. The Deputy Town Clerk of Nottingham, a member of the High Pavement Unitarian Church, has received a presentation from the Corporation Officials, at the hands of the Mayor, in commemoration of 50 years' service with the Corporation; Rev. H. D. Roberts, on service in France, has received commission as full lieutenant; Rev. Walter Short, B.A., of Bootle, on War Service, has recieved commission as 2nd Lieut., 3rd Yorkshire Light Infantry; Rev. Dr. Chas. Hargrove was preacher at Mill Hill, Leeds, for the 244th Anniversary, Dec. 31st; Lieut.-Col. Rev. C. S. Bullock, of Ottawa, Canada, an American Unitarian Minister serving with the Canadians, has been preaching in various Unitarian churches, and says that he is one of 32,000 Americans who have joined the Canadian Legion; Rev. Dr. L. P. Jacks is preparing a biography of his father-in-law, the late Dr. Stopford A. Brooke, to be published shortly; Captain Richard Roscoe, of Hampstead, has been awarded the Military Cross; Major Cecil Crosskey, of the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, has been specially mentioned in Sir Douglas Haigh's recent dispatch, and Lieut. Sayer, of the same church, has been awarded the Military Cross; the same church took £96 in special collections for the Red Cross Society on Sunday, Dec. 31st; Rev. D. Delta Evans has a letter in "The London Welshman and Kelt" giving particulars of the career of the Unitarian, Dr. John Evans, F.S.A. (1767-1827), who was minister at Worship Street Chapel, London, for 35 years.

The Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, has given many distinguished Unitarians to high position in public life, the most notable at present being Mr. Neville Chamberlain, who has now resigned the Lord Mayoralty to become Government Director of National Service. We have received a copy of "The Free Catholic" edited by the Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas, from which it appears that the Free Catholic Movement is winning support from the more Liberal orthodox people. Its fundamental principle is "absolute moral and spiritual loyalty to our Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God," and its General Object lays down the necessity of "due administration of the sacraments"; it is evidently therefore sacramentarian, and though professedly non-credal, is exclusive to those who cannot accept such conditions.

The Rev. Frank Bullock has been inducted at the Leigh Unitarian Church as a fully accredited minister; the Sheffield and District Association of Unitarian and Kindred Churches held its 5th annual meetings on Jan. 11th, at which there was a Conference on "The Churches after the War"; the Rt. Hon. Viscount Haldane lectured on "The Future of the Nation" at Huddersfield, Jan. 10th, under the auspices of the Unitarian Social Union; Lieut. W. P. Moss, of Newcastle-on-Tyne Church of the Divine Unity has received the Military Cross, and Mr. C. N. Levin is gazetted a captain; Mr. and Mrs. Heale have been welcomed to the Church at Bradford, Manchester; Chowbent Congregation has sent a 6s. Postal Order to 100 young men who make up its Roll of Honour.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES: Rev. W. W. C. Pope, of Lewisham, has accepted appointment to the Croydon Free Christian Church; Rev. E. I. Fripp, B.A., of Leicester, has accepted appointment to Dunham Road Chapel, Altrincham.

DEATHS: Mr. Wilby Law, Northampton, Dec. 13th, 78; Pte. Edwin Coysh, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, died in France, Dec. 22nd, 26; Miss Bella Bonomi, London, Dec. 25th; Mrs. Wm. Leggatt; (nee Haslam), Bolton, Dec. 25th; Mrs. Edith Reid, Swansea, Dec. 22nd, 79; Mr. Franklin Wilson, Hull, Dec. 21st, 77; Mr. Alderman George Hughes, Evesham, Dec. 26th; Mr. Samuel Etchells, Failsworth, Manchester, Dec. 18th; Mr. R. D. Howells, Pontypridd, Dec. 16th, 69; Mrs. Alfred Else, formerly of Leicester, at Bournemouth, Jan. 7th; Miss Jane Ann Woolley, Kersal, Manchester, Jan. 3rd, 63; Mr. John McWilliams, Belfast, Jan. 5th; Mrs. E. Carlier, Lewisham, Jan. 10th, 51; Miss Harrop, Dukinfield, Jan. 15th, 82; Miss Woolley, of Cross-street Chapel, Manchester. Rev. Hubert Clarke, B.A., Godalming, Jan. 21st, 64.

For the Boys at the War.

Dear Boys in the War,—

You have received many letters from home, and you look eagerly and expectantly for others which are on the way. Dr. Estlin Carpenter's message has also reached you from our Unitarian Headquarters, Essex Hall, London, with that helpful booklet compiled especially for you, and entitled—"For Freedom and Right." Some of you may receive this magazine, and therefore it contains this word of greeting to you. We think of you every day, and many times each day. Our hearts are with you in your trying experiences. The snow lies deep upon the ground as these words are being penned and we wonder how you are faring in camp, or in the trenches, at the guns, or on shipboard. We are not unmindful of all you have to bear, of the dangers in front of you, of the hardships inevitable in War service that you are called upon to endure. But you do it for the sake of those at home; to protect our land from invasion, to preserve our liberties, our institutions, from destruction by the enemy. You do it for the sake of Belgium and all the small nations whose rights are violated. You do it bravely for France and for the securing of the best interests of humanity everywhere. We are proud of you, and we feel that wherever you are you will win respect for the name of Britain, and do honour to the fame of your native land and to the homes you have left behind. You are taking part in the greatest struggle in the world's history, of right against might, and using your might for the Right. The victorious result of your efforts will be the making of a new world and a brighter prospect for all mankind.

We sincerely trust that the religious faith you have learned in our Unitarian Churches and Sunday Schools is found to be a source of strength to you in this very trying time. Letters come from some of you telling us that it is so. Here is an extract from one written to a Unitarian minister, which expresses no doubt what most of you feel:

"While I have been in the trenches I have stood thinking of the times I have spent at the chapel and Sunday school, and prayed that I might come back safe again, and what I have learned I put it down to your teaching, and it has made me look to my Sunday School more when I have been under shell-fire, and I do not think for one moment that there is a man that does not look to God in this terrible war."

It is something to know that the influences received at home are a source of strength and encouragement where you are. "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart!" We are ever anxious about you, but glad to know that you bear yourselves so cheerfully. No doubt you often sing the hymns and songs you sang with us at home. Keep on singing, it is a great help. Let us know how you are, and what we can do for you. Send a letter to the Editor so that he may insert bits of news from you on this page. Our hearts are warm with good wishes for you always.

Yours faithfully,

A UNITARIAN MINISTER.

January, 1917.

We Shall Grow.

We shall a little grow
To see old things with new and fuller eyes,
And take in so
All the world gives us of surprise,
Its sudden-falling sadness
And swift-upspringing gladness,
As to believe and see
Some great untroubled good beyond life's mystery.

Faith can see more than sight:
For faith looks all the veils of being through,
And reads aright,
As in a book writ large and true,
What the mind dimly gropes for,
And what the quick heart hopes for,
And what the soul will gain
That, wrestling with its God, urges no prayer in vain.

Faith sees beyond the strife
The peace for which the world and man were made,
And all our life,
After earth's fickle shine and shade,
Caught in the light supernal
That beats on things eternal;
Sees how our souls at length,
Finding the perfect way, journey from strength to strength.

W. C. HALL.

From the Business End.

BY A MELIORIST.

II.—"WALLIS'S WAY OUT."

It hadn't been a cheerful Sunday. With a sky of dismal grey above, slush and rain puddles under foot, and a ceaseless, teasing drizzle between, it was not surprising that but few people cared to leave the warmth and brightness of home firesides. Consequently, when William Wallis, the assiduous secretary of Bardsley Street Unitarian Church, counted heads during evening service, he was soon through his task. Thirty-seven was the number recorded, and it made him far from happy.

Arrived at home, and in the company of his three friends, he gave utterance to his pent-up feelings.

"It's simply marvellous how wet the rain is on Sundays," he said rather testily.

The others, prepared by the previous Sunday's conversation, knew exactly what he meant. Johnson exchanged glances with Wilson, but neither spoke. It was the fatherly voice of John Baines that replied.

"Now, William, don't let this thing get on your nerves; it looks rather like doing so."

"Well, isn't it disappointing?" exclaimed Wallis. "There were folk absent to-night, owing to a drop of rain, who will be off to the 'pictures' to-morrow if it rains cats and dogs."

"Ah, but isn't that a different story, William? The Picture House draws."

"But surely, Mr. Baines, 'Bardsley Street' matters more than the 'pictures.'"

"Not, I think, to some of those who were missing to-night."

"You mean," interposed Wilson, "they don't feel the picture-pull, so to speak, of 'Bardsley Street.'"

"Precisely, Ben. You may be sure they wouldn't go to the pictures, even in fine weather, unless they really wanted to."

"But, Mr. Baines," put in Johnson, "you don't think that is a sufficient vindication of the stay-aways?"

"No, Henry, I don't; I am only trying to put the matter from their side and point of view."

"I think I see the drift of your explanation," said Wallis. "If they felt differently about 'Bardsley Street' a drop of rain wouldn't keep them away."

"Exactly!"

"Why don't they feel differently, I wonder?" queried Wilson.

"That," said Mr. Baines, "is the question I've been pondering since our chat last Sunday."

"And what is your conclusion?" asked Johnson.

John Baines smiled genially at the questioner, and paused as if choosing his words. At last he spoke.

"I am not a young man, Henry," he said, "but I am thankful I am not too old to learn; and, not only to learn, but to revise opinions I have held for a long time. I think I have been wrong."

"In what way wrong, Mr. Baines?" enquired Wilson, voicing the one thought of the three interested listeners.

"Not wrong, mind you, in respecting the rights of my fellow-worshippers, but in imagining they were really free."

"I believe I see what you mean," said Johnson; "but it would puzzle me to put it into words."

"What I mean is this. Mere freedom is mere nothingness; there is no such thing as mere freedom. Real freedom is freedom from something but especially for something. Now, we are thinking of freedom in connection with Unitarianism, which is Christianity free from ecclesiastical dogma, truly, but Christianity which is something positive, vital, real. In our revulsion from what we call orthodoxy, whose creeds are mental manacles, I fear we have talked so much about liberty, without defining what we meant, as to give many of our people a totally wrong impression, and instead of helping them to realise what Paul calls 'the glorious liberty of the sons of God,' we have allowed them to drift into indifference to Christianity altogether."

"That, I presume," said Johnson, "explains why Bardsley Street fails to draw on wet Sundays. You mean the absentees have no compelling incentive to attend."

"I think it is conclusive," said Mr. Baines.

"But surely," urged Wilson, "there ought to be a way out of this unhappy impasse."

"I hope there may be. In fact, since our talk of a week ago I have come to think there is much in what William called the business end of this matter, and if his proposal turns out to be what I anticipate, it will have my full sympathy and support."

"Now, Wallis," said Johnson to the secretary, who seemed to have lapsed into thoughtful silence, "let's hear what you have to suggest."

"Well, really," responded Wallis, slightly embarrassed, "what Mr. Baines has said makes my idea seem trite and hardly worth mentioning."

"Not in the least, my boy," said Mr. Baines encouragingly; "I believe you have found a practical way out."

"Go on, Wallis," urged Wilson, "you had some idea of getting the committee on the move."

"Well, then, to begin with, I think it is the duty of every committee-man to set an example of regular attendance."

"Quite right," said Mr. Baines.

"Understand, I don't wish to set up myself as a sort of official conscience, but, looking at the thing from the business end, if the office-bearers give the congregation the impression that attendance at wor-

ship doesn't matter, they have no right to blame anyone else for empty benches."

"Right again, William," assented Mr. Baines.

"To come to the point, then, there are a dozen committee-men, and my opinion is that at least ten might be present at every service. Did you notice how many were there to-night?"

"I can tell you," said Wilson; "in addition to you and me there was the treasurer."

"Which means," said Wallis, "that had there been the ten of us, instead of having only eight men present there would have been fifteen."

"I noticed Dickson was absent," put in Johnson dryly.

"For the moment," pleaded Mr. Baines, "let us leave poor Tom out. We shall find him in by and by. Go on, William."

"In addition to the present committee, there are the four members who retired according to rule last year. Of those, you, Mr. Baines, were the solitary representative."

"That's so," commented Wilson.

"To say there ought to have been two others is surely reasonable," suggested Wallis.

"Quite!" assented Mr. Baines.

"That means," said Wallis, warming to his work, "after making reasonable allowance, we ought to have had thirteen of our leaders at service, and we had a paltry four."

"It is hardly creditable to us as a committee," remarked Wilson

"It is anything but that, and that isn't all. Of the sixteen of us, fourteen are married, and, fortunately, our wives are healthy and active. Leaving out five who have small children, if the men made a point of attending, we could fairly expect at least seven of the ladies."

"But the women folk do come pretty well," said Mr. Baines.

"Yes, they do," Wallis agreed, "but there are two or three who would come oftener but for the carelessness of the men."

"Let's see," enquired Johnson, "how many have you got now?"

"Out of a possible thirty we have a probable twenty-two. But I haven't done yet. Of the fourteen of us who are married, twelve have families, several fairly numerous. Striking out the smaller children, there remain at least thirty young people all of whom have passed through the Sunday School or are in the upper classes. Suppose we make a liberal discount; I think we might expect about two-thirds to accompany their parents to church, as I am sure they would were the parents really in earnest. See what that would mean! Out of a possible sixty we could reckon on about forty-two."

"And how many did you say were at church to-night?" asked Johnson.

"Thirty-seven," was the ironic reply, "five less than we had a right to expect in connection with the committee alone."

"It's rather deplorable, don't you think? when you come to look at it," said Wilson thoughtfully.

"It's worse than that," said Johnson hotly; "it's dishonourable. Looked at fairly and squarely, I consider that no man has a right to allow himself to be elected on the committee unless he intends to be in his place at the services. And then some of them have the effrontery to criticise and complain. Cheek, I call it, nothing else."

"Henry, Henry," chided Mr. Baines. "Go gently, my boy. This unhappy state of things is not new, and, after all, it is the result of our blindness to the business end of our movement."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Baines," apologised Johnson. "But isn't it provoking when the thing is weighed up as Wallis has just done it?"

"Granted, Henry; but did you ever get so hot about it before to-night?"

"I must admit I never did."

"Then let that help you to take a considerate view of the delinquents. You have your music as an incentive to regular attendance; if you hadn't that are you sure you would be quite as devoted to 'Bardsley Street' as you are? Excuse my being personal, Henry."

"Perhaps not, Mr. Baines," was the chastened reply. "I see I was too aggressive."

"However, your interest, and yours, Ben, and yours, too, William, is a good sign, and looks as though something should happen before long."

"Oh, the matter ought not to end here," said Wilson with conviction.

"When is the next committee meeting?" asked Johnson. "Though I am an outsider I feel keen on the matter."

"Excuse my presumption," said Mr. Baines, "but if you will accept the advice of an 'old hand,' you will make haste slowly."

"How do you mean, Mr. Baines?" said Wallis

"Well, William, you will admit that your ideas are what might be termed revolutionary. Suppose, without any sort of warning or preparation, you had launched them upon Henry, Ben, and me; even we, who are not among the stay-aways, should have been a bit staggered."

"I see," said Wallis, "you mean the ground must be prepared before the seed is sown."

"You couldn't have put it better."

"I suppose we ought to tackle the committee-men individually, and win them over to the idea," said Wallis.

"The very thing," said Mr. Baines approvingly. "There are ten besides Ben and yourself. Suppose you two see three each, and leave the other four to me."

"Including Dickson," laughed Johnson.

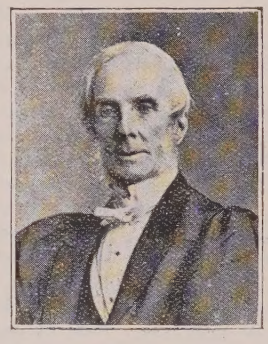
"Yes, I had better have Tom; I could hardly trust him to the tender mercy of either of these two," said Mr. Baines with merry eyes.

And so, in excellent spirits, the four close friends brought their informal conference to a close, arranging to meet again on the coming Sunday night to compare notes and to decide on the next move.

(To be continued).

Unitarianism.

According to the REV. WILLIAM GASKELL, M.A. (1805-1884).



It (Unitarianism) has the advantage over the systems to which it is opposed, of having its fundamental principles set forth in the very words of Scripture.

"To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things."

"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you."

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

. . . . . .

Our principles have their root in human nature. They are more in harmony with reason and with conscience than those which are commonly preached as orthodox.

We ask nothing for the faith we preach but a free and full examination of it. We say that God is One, not Three in One; we say that Christ was a true, real, noble man, not a person in the Trinity, equal with the Father, of whom he affirmed he "is greater than I"; we say that we are born weak and fallible, but not tainted with sin, and ordained to depravity and hell; that we are created capable of good, and that our mission is to promote it; that no power in existence can defile our souls, or ruin our hopes, without our own concurrence; that freedom of thought and action is our birthright and to prove all things, that we may hold fast that which is good, our unquestionable privilege; we say that true religion is a matter of loving choice, not of fear and constraint; we say that all things, under the guidance of our Heavenly Father's care, are tending to fit us for the blessedness of a better world—we say this; and the natural sentiments, which are of God, re-echo and confirm what we say.

(Rev. William Gaskell, M.A., was minister of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, from 1828 to 1884; Professor in Manchester New College; one of the earliest Tutors of Owens College; a founder and later Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary College; a founder, and Chairman of the Manchester Portico Library; and husband of the famous novelist biographer of Charlotte Bronte. The foregoing explanation of Unitarianism is from "Strong Points of Unitarian Christianity.")

* * *

An Old Meeting House.

This picture shows the Old Meeting House, Birmingham, as it was in 1791, before it was burned down in the riots of the July of that year. It was re-built on the same spot, where the congregation worshipped until they were ejected by the requirements of the London and North Western Railway Company in 1881, after which they removed to their new church in Bristol Street, of which the Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas is the present minister. In 1791 the minister and congregation were Unitarian, as they have been from that time. As an example of Nonconformist architecture the Older Meeting House here shown is curious, if not unique.

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The N. Midland Presbyterian and Unitarian Association.

This Association exists for the "promotion of the worship of God, and the brotherly co-operation of its members." It began its life at Duffield, near Derby, in 1798, as an annual meeting of dissenting ministers, and membership was intended to embrace Independents, Baptists and Presbyterians in Notts, Derby and South Yorks. But after the first record we hear no more of the Baptists, and the Independents appear only to make a rather brusque bow of withdrawal, so that, in fact, only Presbyterians were included. Every minister was required by rule "to come prepared to preach at every meeting, or forfeit the sum of 1s. 6d.," and "no epithet descriptive of the excellence, etc." (we like that "etc.") of the sermon delivered must ever be inserted in the minute book! They walked by the narrow path in those old days! But in 1802 it was decided to invite "respectable lay friends" to the meetings and the dinners of the society, and doubtless it was due to this secular infusion that later it was agreed to hold each year a "congregational tea party." Various alterations in name, purpose and procedure bring us to 1865, when the present name and constitution were adopted.

As the reader of the "Unitarian Monthly" would expect, we find that the members of this association were men of large heart and earnest public spirit, concerned often with matters of civic and national interest. A petition in favour of National Education is sent to the House of Commons in 1839, and resolutions concerning Civil and Religious Liberty and the Abolition of Slavery are passed in 1851.

To-day, including the Cause at Bedford, where the services are held in private houses, the Association includes 19 congregations in the counties of Bedford, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Northants and Notts, and a genuine spirit of zeal for the Faith and of fellowship among the churches finds expression in a number of ways. The churches at Lincoln and Newark having been re-opened, there are now no closed churches in this area. There is connected, a Ministers' Association and a vigorous Sunday School Association. A Lay Preachers' Union does invaluable service in the district and is at present chiefly responsible for the pulpits at Christ Church (Nottingham), and Coalville. The "North Midland Circular" is published quarterly and gratis. A new "forward movement" including the distribution of suitable literature and the possible grouping together in new centres of those interested in the Unitarian Faith is being inaugurated, and is receiving the hearty support of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

J.C.B.

Rev. J. Park Davies, B.A., B.D.

NANTWICH.

(This sketch was crowded out of last issue).

Rev. J. Park Davies is a native of Cardiganshire. He attended Sunday School and Chapel first at Pantydefaid, and later at Graig, Llandyssul. He was guided into the ministry by the late Rev. W. James, B.A. After three years at the local Intermediate School he proceeded in 1898 with a County Scholarship to the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. At the end of the first session he won an exhibition. In 1899 he became an external student of Manchester College, Oxford. Three years later he graduated B.A. (Wales) with honours in Semitic Languages. During his stay at Aberystwyth he took a prominent part in establishing the Unitarian cause of which he was the first secretary. 1902-5 he spent at M.C.O. He won the Russell Martineau Hebrew Prize and in 1905 he secured the University of Oxford Houghton Syriac Prize. For the next two years he was Hibbert Scholar. The first he spent at Wadham College preparing for the Honour School of Theology which he passed in 1906, and the second in Harvard, U.S.A., where he graduated B.D. with first-class honours. His first ministry was at Pontypridd (1908-13). While there he took an active part in the Progressive League Movement. He became organizer for South Wales as well as a member of the Central Committee in London. After a time he gave up both positions owing to what he felt to be Mr. Campbell's unfair attitude towards Unitarianism. 1911-1913 he was joint secretary of the S.-E. Wales Unitarian Society; he served on the committee of the School of Social Service for Wales, taking part in its first conference at Landrindod Wells; 1912-13 he was President of the Pontypridd and District Band of Hope Union. Since 1913 he has been minister of the Old Presbyterian (Unitarian) Chapel, Nantwich. He also preaches occasionally at Willaston School. For two years he has been Secretary of the Nantwich Ministers' Fraternal; he is a member of the Public Library Committee; of the Nantwich and District Band of Hope Union Committee, and of the local War Charities Organisation Committee. For the current year he is President of the South Cheshire and District Unitarian Association. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Sunday School Monthly. For the past four years he has also been examiner in Biblical studies at the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen.

Not Too Proud for the Job.

By Rev. WILLIAM C. HALL, M.A.

We must see the good of our present condition, the fortunes it proffers over against the misfortunes it already has involved; then we shall be able to look into the future with sane expectancy of the good that awaits us. The man who murmurs over his lot, whose mind expends and wastes itself over every untoward incident, who gives to repining and complaint the strength which he might use to wrest palpable good from seeming ill, will not achieve much that will ever bless him, and his dreams may only develop into nightmares. We have first to learn to accept what we have, and to receive with some approach to equanimity what may come to us in the ordinary course. We have to do a little cheerful singing with the precious rhymester:—

"It ain't no use to grumble and complain,
'Tis just as cheap and easy to rejoice;
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,
Why! rain's my choice."

That represents the proper spirit. Here you are, my friend, in work you think you don't care about, in an occupation which is uncongenial to you, or, as the case may be more truly stated, you are uncongenial to it, not giving it a chance. You throw up your hands instead of steeping them in it. You revolt against it, turning your impulsive thoughts unto heaven only knows what. You fling yourself outside of it just when you ought to fling yourself into it, and the thing grins at you, and you have not the common sense to see that even in a grin there is humour that would laugh you out of your folly. Revolt, and you play your little spiritless or dare-devil game of "contra mundum," and then wonder why the world doesn't help you through. It is sorry sport, this wild defiance of immediate fate. What prizes do you suppose it will bring you? Yes, you may be a man better than your job: that should mean that you will make the job better, not that you are too proud to do it. You are only a blacksmith, you say. Yes, but another man is only a stoker or a pumper of bellows, but the glow of his work and the music of it—O long-drawn, deep-chested voice of a God, even Vulcan.

Not revolt against our lot, but acceptance of it, is the first thing necessary for successful life; it is the first condition of improving our lot. And our improving it is our being proved in it, being improved in it, tested and trained and made fit for all the unfolding labours of the future. The worthiness of a man at his present task is the certificate of his worth for all other undertakings. The world is not prolific of that sort of genius who evidences his capacity for larger responsibilities by his disinclination to the smaller duties that make up the calling of the ordinary man, and such geniuses of the kind as it does produce it never treats with special generosity. Earth is strewn with the small wreckage of brilliance that never shone because it could not shine where it first found itself.

A Talk to the Children.

My Dear Young Folks,—

You hear very much about war now-a-days. You meet the soldiers in the streets. You see people eager to get the daily newspapers to secure tidings of the war.

Once, in 1896, at a great Peace Meeting in Budapest, a gentleman lifted his little eight year old son on to a table, and then said to the meeting:

"May I speak a word, so that you all may hear, to the youngest member of this Congress?"

Then he lifted his hand above the child's head and exclaimed:—

"I beg you, my son, to HATE WAR and LOVE HUMANITY; I beg you to teach the same to your own children in the future—HATE WAR and LOVE HUMANITY."

This is the kind of warfare which all people ought to hate,—the warfare that kills people, that destroys good things, that causes so much sorrow and makes misery everywhere. You will hate that, will you not? You will do all you can to put an end to that kind of war. There are other kinds of warfare which help people to live, which save them from dying: against evil of every kind, impure air, bad smells which poison people, impure water, bad food, and selfish thoughts, greed, lies, and deceit and every kind of wrong-doing. These evil things we must fight against to make people safe from danger, to keep them healthy, alive, and happy.

If a house is on fire and people are in danger of being burnt to death we ought to fight the fire to save life and to save the house. You see what kind of war we must all hate, and you see also that if we love humanity as we ought to do there is a holy kind of warfare which we must not hate, in which all our noblest fighting powers may have full play, and in which you can learn to be heroes and champions of Right.

Will you enlist in this Holy War against wrong-doing, and help to make this earth into God's kingdom of heaven? It is a glorious warfare, and your help is needed, O, so very, very much.

EDITOR.

Joseph Barker.

By REV. HENRY WILLIAMSON (Concluded).

Does any one ask: What is the good of reviving the story of a serious failure in the efforts made three-quarters of a century ago to give the working classes the privilege of the Gospel in its original purity and value? I answer, Barker had clearly separated the wheat of truth in Christianity from the chaff of superstition and priestcraft in the popular theology. Although he failed to perform the task of leadership, he certainly succeeded in showing that Christianity possessed qualities which had heretofore not been apprehended by the man in the street.

Very soon Joseph Barker broke his connection with Unitarians, respecting which see "Christian Reformer," Sept. 1848, p 573.

In 1855, Joseph Barker and John Bowes held a public debate in Stockport on three successive nights—Barker to prove that "the Scriptures are not conducive to morality and virtue." He is described as of Ohio, America. Thomas Bailey, Esq., was in the chair. The debate was published. It is very poor on both sides.

About 1864 Barker was in England again, lecturing in support of the Southern Confederacy, and making advances to Methodists and Unitarians. What a career! And yet his life work was not all loss.

Joseph Barker left behind him his dying testimony reported in an American newspaper. He is not the only one to make such a confession, as follows:—

"Joseph Barker.—This man came from England to this country and traversed the Union in all directions as an atheist, materialist, debater and lecturer. He was exceedingly popular among those of his way of thinking, and by his friends was thought invincible. He at last accepted the Christian faith. As the end of his earthly career approached, he called for his eldest son, Mr. Gilbert his lawyer, and Mr. Kellam of Omaha, one of his trustees, and said 'I feel that I am approaching my end; and I desire that you receive my last words and be witness to them. I wish you to witness that I am in my right mind and fully understand what I have been saying; and dying that I die in the full belief of Jesus Christ and in the faith and love of his religion as revealed in his life and works, as described in the New Testament; that I have an abiding faith in the love of God, as God is revealed to us in His Son Jesus Christ, and I die trusting in God's infinite love and mercy, and in full faith of a future and better life. I am sorry for my past errors, but during the last few years of my life I have striven to undo the harm I did, by doing all I could to serve God by showing the beauty and wisdom of the religion of His Son Jesus Christ, and I wish you to write down and witness this my last confession of faith that there may be no doubt about it.'—'Omaha Herald,' America, 1885.

This is not orthodoxy,

Literature.

"For Freedom and Right,—Readings, Hymns, Prayers, for Men on Active Service," 6d. net. The Lindsey Press, 5, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.

This neat little book enclosed in a cloth case, and of a size convenient for even a small pocket is just the thing needed for our soldiers and sailors away on war service. There is a good portrait frontispiece of the Rev. Dr. Carpenter, President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. There are selected daily readings from a variety of well-known authors including an admixture from Unitarian sources; some pages, too, of very apt Scripture selections; twelve very suitable short prayers; and fifteen excellent hymns. Many who are not away on active service would prize a copy of this booklet if they had it, and those soldiers and sailors of our churches who have not been already supplied from Essex Hall, should certainly receive a copy from their relatives. More than that, it is good to send to men on war service who have no Unitarian connexion.

"For Those who Mourn," compiled by Rev. W. G. Tarrant, B.A., 1s. net.—The Lindsey Press (as above).

This is a neat volume of selected Readings, Meditations, and Prayers, for "such stricken and bereaved hearts as may in these sorrowful days feel the need of some helpful and consoling words to aid their own thoughts and devotions." The readings are selections of prose and poetry under the following heads: (1) "In Their Praise"; (2) "Our Life Struggle"; (3) "The Divine Fulness"; (4) "Heart's Longing"; (5) "Gifts"; (6) "The Life Immortal"; (7) "Peace in well-doing." The spirit of the whole book is well expressed in one of the selections under "Gifts" p. 41:—

"Much must be borne that it is hard to bear,
Much must be given away that it were sweet to keep;
God help us all, who need indeed His help—
And yet, I know the Shepherd loves His sheep."

We cannot imagine any bereaved heart reading these pages and not being greatly cheered and comforted by it.

National Conference Guilds' Union.

(This National Conference is of Unitarian and kindred Churches).

President: Rev. J. M. LLOYD THOMAS.
Gen. Sec.: Miss M. TWIST, 34, Harbury Road, Birmingham.
Topic List Sec.: Rev. MORTIMER ROWE, B.A.
Extension Sec.: Rev. H. FISHER SHORT.

Monthly Message: "AN ENCOURAGING SIGN."

The amount of splendid endeavour and willing sacrifice called forth by the war is thrilling in its variety and magnitude. Always has there been in this country a body of generous people upon whose ears and hearts appeals for social service and financial support have fallen like good seed on good ground, and they have brought forth fruit a hundred fold. The charitable public, however, has been a restricted one, the mass of the population being content to mind its own business and to leave the business of caring for good causes to the few who looked beyond the narrow margin of their own affairs. But the war came with its stirring challenge, and to-day the few has become the many and the many the few. Not to be doing one's bit, by hand or purse, for the soldiers, their dependents, the starving Belgians, or other victims of the War, is to be numbered with the ignoble and unenviable minority.

Nevertheless, whilst rejoicing that the nation has grown so magnificently philanthropic, it is sad to reflect that many urgent causes, owing to their disconnection with the war, have been neglected and, through neglect, allowed to languish and even to die. Our Guild movement is a case in point. So many Guilds are in a state of suspended animation, so little interest is it possible to rouse concerning our aims and ideals, that the Union has been obliged largely to limit its activities for the period of the war. Judge of the present writer's glad surprise, therefore, when, a few days ago, he received a letter from a recently formed Guild applying for affiliation with the Union. The event was tonic in its effect. It roused new hopes. The possibility of new Guilds coming into being even in war-time filled his mind as a happy thought.

May this new affiliation be the sign as of the coming of spring, of a revival of interest in the moral and spiritual welfare of our young people. If you have no Guild connected with your Church and Sunday School, perhaps this friendly little message will suggest the desirability of your oragnising one without delay. You need a Guild, your young folk need one, and the group of churches to which you and they belong, needs as many Guilds as possible.

"Reasons Why" must be reserved until next month; but if you desire it, you may have information, before then, if you will kindly write Rev. H. Fisher Short, The Parsonage, Park-lane, Wigan.

Short Stories.

A CHILD AND ITS MOTHER.

A child cries in the night. It wakes in the dark, stretches out its little hands, and calls. That little babe is praying. It is praying to its mother, and she hears it at once. She was asleep, but she hears the cry. Others are in the house, but she hears the cry first of all. Presently there is silence. The prayer is answered, and she is comforting the child on her bosom.

THE FORCE OF EXAMPLE.

In the 18th Century there lived a wild chieftain in the mountains of Sicily named Mica (Mee-ka). Much of his money he had gained through robbery. When older he lived a quieter life in his dwelling on the hills. But he had a great sorrow. His son was rough and unloving, and once he had sprung upon his father with knife uplifted to kill him, but he was prevented. An old peasant of the district shot one or two hares near Mica's house, was seized by some of Mica's men, and the chieftain in a rage, had the old peasant locked up as a punishment for poaching. Next day a young man came and said to the Chieftain, "Sir, I am the son of the peasant you have imprisoned. He is old; he cannot bear being shut up in a cell. I can bear it better. Let me be punished in his stead."

The robber was astonished, and turning to the old man, he said:

"How is it your son is so good?"

"I tried to be good myself," said the peasant.

He had shown his son the way, and his son had followed it.

ALICE AYRES.

One night in 1885, a fire broke out in a London oilshop. Very soon the house was red with flames, and the sky above glowed with crimson; and hundreds of people had flocked to see, and the rush of fire-engines was heard. Three children slept in an upper room, in charge of the servant, Alice Ayres. Alice was the first to awaken and find all their lives in peril. She darted to the window, flung it open, threw a feather bed into the street below, and then one by one she dropped the children safely on to the soft bed; and all the while the smoke puffed about her, and showers of sparks dazzled her eyes. Alice now became faint, she tried to jump, she fell on the hard pavement instead of the bed, and she was carried to Guy's hospital hurt and dying. She saved the children and lost her own life by doing it. Was she not a saviour in her way as was Jesus in his? Jesus suffered cricifixion because he tried to save men from evil.

Nat. Unitarian Temperance Association.

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.

President: Rev. Dr. J. E. CARPENTER. Hon. Sec.: Mr. E. F. COWLIN, 19, Northwood Road, Forest Hill, London.
Hon. Treasurer: Mr. E. BUSER.

THE REASONABLENESS OF THE BAND OF HOPE.

There has been, or will be, sent to teachers in r Sunday Schools, a letter from presidents of nday School Unions urging them to keep con-ntly before our scholars the enormous import-ce of the practice of Temperance. It lays special ress upon the necessity at the present time from e point of view of conserving the best things for e most important needs in National life because e are at war, but it also urges the duty because all times and under all conditions, indulgence alcoholic drink exposes the young to manifold ngers both physical and moral. In the early ars when life-long habits are being formed and inciples of conduct established, it is essential at boys and girls on the way to manhood and omanhood should be trained in the path of stead-stness to resist and overcome temptation. And concludes—Shall we not do our part by streng-ening our Bands of Hope, our Temperance So-eties, and other similar agencies, to lead the ture manhood and womanhood of the land along ose paths which lead most effectively to personal alth, purity, and moral strength, and to the rger issues of national righteousness and wel-re. This is an opportune moment for drawing e attention of those who have the care of the young to the importance of Temperance teaching in our Sunday Schools, which we have urged in previous issues of the "Unitarian Monthly." But it is also a most reasonable argument, and confirms the claim of Temperance workers of the reeasonableness of Bands of Hope, etc. Whatever we may think as to the right of private judgment in the adult on the question, it is reasonable to secure the young from the power of so seductive and pernicious an influence as alcoholic drinking, and to train them in the practice of self-control. "As the twig is bent the tree is inclined," and it is difficult, nay impossible, to straighten the crooked tree; it is far better to hold the twig straight by constraining ties to a strong support until it has developed the inward strength for uprightness. We therefore most heartily and earnestly commend this letter from the Presidents of the S.S. Unions, and we hope that it will be taken up without prejudice by every Sunday School Superintendent and Teacher, and acted upon in a thorough manner. Let our Band of Hope and Guild workers also see to it by improved methods and increased earnestness, to press home the truths taught in the classes and confirm and co-operate with this revival of Temperance zeal. Again, we would call upon our Churches to let us have a Band of Hope in every Church.

R.N.

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Literary matter to be addressed to the Editor; business communications to the Manager.

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT
5, Fetter Lane, London, E.C.

ADVERTISERS, Churches, Associations, and ther Institutions should note that this Magazine is he organ of various Unitarian Movements, is used y considerably OVER 100 CHURCHES, and reaches bout 30,000 READERS. Hence any Advertisements f Meetings, Services, Special Events, Bazaars, or nything else are certain to be of effective value ERMS: 3/6 per inch in columns; 25/- per column; 5/- half-column; £2 10s. the whole page.

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